

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 COME-00 EB-07 INT-05 GSA-01 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 /027 R

DRAFTED BY AF/S:DPNCHRISTENSEN:DRP

APPROVED BY AF/S:RTHAVERKAMP

EB/ISM:DPALAZOLLO (INFO)

COM/BIC/OIM:SKMILLER (INFO)

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R 101856Z MAR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

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CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, ETRD, SF, MZ

SUBJECT: VISIT OF AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TO ASSESS CHROME
ORE EXPORT SITUATION

REF: STATE 55861

1. DIAMOND SHAMROCK CHEMICAL COMPANY HAS INFORMED DEPARTMENT THAT THREE-MAN GROUP OF COMPANY EXECUTIVES WILL BE VISITING SOUTH AFRICA MID-MARCH TO ASSESS CHROME ORE SHIPMENT NETWORK THROUGH MAPUTO AND POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA. (PURPOSE OF TRIP THUS APPEARS IDENTICAL TO THAT OF PPG INDUSTRIES MENTIONED REFTTEL.) GROUP WILL INCLUDE JACK DANNEMILLER, DIRECTOR OF PURCHASES.
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ING; ROBERT WEBER, VICE PRESIDENT OF SODA PRODUCTS

DIVISION; AND CHESTER RUDOLF, PLANT MANAGER. THEY WILL BE IN JOHANNESBURG ON MARCH 16 THROUGH 18 AND WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH MESSRS. KIRBY AND SWEETWOOD ON MORNING OF MARCH 17 (WEDNESDAY) IF POSSIBLE. THEY WILL CALL CONGEN ON TUESDAY AFTERNOON TO CONFIRM VISIT.

2. ACCORDING TO DIAMOND SHAMROCK REPRESENTATIVES, RELATIVELY LONG SHIPPING DELAYS ARE CURRENTLY BEING ENCOUNTERED AT MAPUTO. SHIPS MUST REPORTEDLY WAIT FOR

30-35 DAYS BEFORE BEING LOADED COMPARED TO ONLY 10-15 DAYS IN EARLY JANUARY. COMPANY REPRESENTATIVE NOTED THAT RECENT CYCLONE WHICH STRUCK SOUTHEASTERN AFRICA DID CONSIDERABLE DAMAGE TO MOZAMBICAN PORT AND RAIL FACILITIES. HE ALSO NOTED RUMORS THAT REMAINING PORTUGUESE PORT AND RAIL TECHNICIANS ARE LEAVING MOZAMBIQUE. CONGESTION APPARENTLY BECAME SO BAD AT ONE POINT AND TIED UP SO MANY ORE CARS THAT SOUTH AFRICA REPORTEDLY SHUT OFF CHROME ORE SHIPMENTS FOR 3 TO 4

WEEKS EARLIER THIS YEAR, BUT SHIPMENTS ARE NOW SAID TO BE MOVING AGAIN.

3. IN VIEW OF GROWING INTEREST IN CHROME ORE SHIPMENT PROBLEMS, DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING SOONEST POST ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION AS REQUESTED IN REFTEL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHROMIUM, EXPORT CONTROLS, EMBARGOES, TRADE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE058256
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DPNCHRISTENSEN:DRP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760091-0764
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760374/aaaacnoi.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 55861
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 JUL 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <13 OCT 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TO ASSESS CHROME ORE EXPORT SITUATION
TAGS: BTRA, ETRD, SF, MZ, DIAMOND SHAMROCK CHEMICAL COMPANY
To: JOHANNESBURG
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006